

CQ de WA2LQO

Sixty Nine Years: 1944 -2013

The official voice of the Grumman Amateur Radio Club

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How I Became a Ham (continued from March 2013)

By Bob Wexelbaum, W2ILP

Synopsis: The first ham station that I visited was that of Murray Halfon, W2NSH. 'NSH suggested that I visit Louis Pascal, W2LTQ to learn more about the technical aspects of ham radio.

W2NSH gave me W2LTQ's telephone number. I called him on a coin-operated 'phone at a local candy store because we did not have a telephone at home. He seemed to be glad to hear from me, because Murray had told him about me. Going against the advice of my parents, I arranged a 7:00 PM meeting, with 'LTQ for the following Wednesday night. Pascal is a French name, and I knew of several Pascals who were mathematicians and philosophers, the most famous being Blaise Pascal (1623-1662).

When I entered Lou Pascal's fifth floor apartment, I was quickly put at ease. Lou was married with a teenaged daughter, and his large apartment was very nicely furnished. He was roasting chestnuts and when they were ready, he served some to me along with iced tea, which we enjoyed as we talked. "So you want to be a ham?" Lou asked. "You do know that Ham Radio can be an expensive hobby, as far as your time and money is concerned" he continued. "However, if you think of Ham Radio as an entry for profitable business knowledge, then it can be very well worth the efforts to learn the technical basics, because they can be applied to many devices" (radio, television, and everything else that is electronic). Lou believed that a Ham license was only a learner's permit to understanding new devices such as *television*. He thought that all serious hams should continue on to also get FCC Commercial licenses, and that hams should build most of their own equipment from scratch. Without doing so, the hobby wasn't much different than collecting baseball cards.

Lou gave me an old copy of "The Radio Amateur's Handbook" to keep. He advised me to read all the beginning chapters because the basics never change. Rather than discuss any ham handbook, Lou picked up a "Scientific American" magazine from his coffee table. Pictured on the cover was a Mobius strip, a loop of a strip of paper which had one twist in it. On that loop of paper there was a horsefly. Lou explained that the horsefly could walk over the entire surface without ever going over an edge. He showed me one that he had made and let me examine its singular surface. I asked, "What has this to do with Ham Radio?" Lou said it shows that when we get into the realm of solid geometry some of the rules that we learned in plane geometry no longer hold. Some of the rules that you will learn for direct current won't be true for alternating current. Some of the techniques that you may have learned for short-wave radio receivers may not be true at ultra-high frequencies. I then told Lou how I had built two and three tube regenerative radio receivers which worked well but I was having trouble with a five tube superhet that I had built. He asked me if I had mounted the parts on wood ("breadboard style") and suggested I should instead mount the components on a metal chassis to provide inter-stage shielding and prevent undesired feedback.

I had expected Lou to demonstrate his ham station but he explained that he was having TVI problems which prevented him from going on the air during prime TV time. He had no interest in CW and had an AM station that ran 1 KW plate input on 75, 20 and 10 Meters, with a rotary beam for 20 and 10 Meters and a wire dipole for 75 Meters on the apartment house roof. Lou had designed and built all of his own receivers and transmitters. Building receivers was rare in those days but building transmitters (before SSB) was a common ham endeavor. Lou opened the door of his radio room but the view of his ham gear was blocked by boxes of radio and TV parts.

I never did learn anything about Lou's formal education. He advised me to pay attention to all that I could learn in school. He said that Radio is a part of Physics and Physics is a part of Science, so that all we learn about Science may be applied to what we need to understand about radio and television. He also explained that Mathematics was a tool of Science. For example, that one must learn trigonometry in order to work out some of the problems that may appear on ham exams. He said that he had worked at a factory that manufactured radio equipment during WW2, but he quit as soon as the war ended and decided that his future would lie in civilian television repair and installation work. TV was new at that time, and made-in-the-USA black and white TV sets were being sold at prices that many people could afford. TV was especially popular in New York, with 7 channels at the time and Lou was running a TV repair business out of his home. He had just rented his own store in the neighborhood, and was about to move all of his parts and test equipment there. He asked me if I could help him and learn to become his assistant. I was excited by the prospect of becoming a TV repairman myself and agreed to meet him at the store at a time scheduled for two weeks later.

This brings me to a part of my story where I have to introduce another of my non-Ham honors classmates, named Marvin Kunins, who lived with his parents and two brothers. His father was a sheet-metal worker, familiarly called a "tin-knocker," building ducts for air-conditioning systems, first at a factory in the 149th Street area and then at a factory owned by Marvin's mother (so that his father could remain a union worker) in the Hunt's Point area of the Bronx. Marvin's older brother was a graduate of Brooklyn Polytechnic and designed the air-conditioning ductwork layouts at home. Marvin's younger brother was a hyper-active kid. I became a close friend of the Kunins family when they lived on Bronx River Avenue in a two family home. They had a TV set, when I had none, so I would come over to watch Milton Berle every week, as well as a few other popular TV shows. Marv's mom often provided home-made apple pie and milk, and when her three sons and I watched TV I almost became a part of the Kunins family. This had the practical advantage of giving me access to a sheet metal shop, where I was occasionally able to get some free galvanized metal and use professional tools to shear, bend and punch it into a radio chassis. Eventually Marvin and I partnered in our own radio repair business, which I will tell you more about later. I will eventually tell you about my first visits to an amateur radio club and another Elmer, W2DUP, who was the Bronx ARRL EC, and introduced me to 2-Meter equipment. (To be continued)

PRESIDENT'S NOTE by ED GELLENDER, WB2EAV

Effective January first, as a result of ARRL elections, NLI Section Manager (and friend of the club), Mike Lisenco N2YBB became the new ARRL Hudson Division Director and Jim Mezey W2FKV stepped up to be our new NLI SM.

Our new Director campaigned to be an active proponent for the division, and I must say that after a few months on the job he has certainly proved himself to be a man of his word. He has already held inter-club meetings in each of the sections. The NLI section meeting had to be rescheduled due to a heavy snowfall and I was unable to attend, but, our club secretary, Karen, W2ABK attended and I can summarize what is happening.

First, Mike is pushing to get more recognition for the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) and updating the local traffic nets. Second, a Hudson Cabinet group has been set up on Yahoo Groups to allow the clubs in the division to have a common discussion forum online. I joined for the club and so far have seen some routine traffic. If anything important shows up I will relay it to the club members.

Last fall, the Hudson Division Awards Dinner was canceled due to Hurricane Sandy. It is now planned to be somewhere in the ENY Section; most likely in Orange County, a 1.5 - 2 hour drive from here. Unfortunately there is no information as of this time as to the exact date or location. Mike also says he expects to have the 2014 dinner here in NLI, and in 2015 the dinner will be back in NNJ where the last few were held.

Ed, WB2EAV

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GRUMMAN AMATEUR RADIO CLUB
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING 3/20/2013
By Karen, W2ABK

The meeting was called to order by Karen at 5:45 PM.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV

Finances continue to be in good shape.

REPEATER REPORT – Gordon, KB2UB

146.745 was noisy

NET REPORT – Karen, W2ABK

Thursday night net at 8:15 PM on 146.745 MHz had 2 check-ins.

Thursday night net at 8:30 PM on 145.330 MHz had 2 check-ins.

Sunday morning net at 7:30 AM on 7.289 MHz had 2 check-ins.

VE REPORT – Ed, WB2EAV

No applicants applied.

OLD BUSINESS

Jack confirmed Field Day at Marjorie Post Park, June 22, 9:00 AM – 11:00 PM and June 23, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

NEW BUSINESS

WE need programs for our meetings.

PROGRAM

Glen, WB2QDS was our guest speaker. He spoke about Tackapausha Park and the rescued animals living there. He is looking for ideas to start a radio station for kids in the park.

GARC NETS: 40 Meters: 7.289 MHz at 7:30 AM EST Sundays

Net Controller: Eugene, W4JMX

2 Meters (repeaters) Thursdays: 146.745 MHz (-600 kHz) at 8:15 PM

145.330 MHz (-600 kHz) at 8:30 PM. Tone for both repeaters: 136.5 Hz.

GARC Net Controller Karen, W2ABK

ARES/RACES NETS: Mondays.

MEETINGS

General Meetings of the GARC are held on the third Wednesday of each month, starting at 5:30 PM, at the Ellsworth Allen Park in Farmingdale. Driving directions and map can be obtained from <http://www.mapquest.com>. It is suggested that the GARC web site be checked to be certain of meeting location, which may change after this newsletter is distributed. Board meetings are held a week before the General Meeting at the Bethpage Skating Rink.

WEBSITE

The GARC web site can be found at <http://www.qsl.net/wa2lqo> . Webmaster is Pat Masterson, KE2LJ. Pictures of GARC activities, archives of newsletters, roster of members, and other information about the GARC may be found there.

INTERNET LINK OF THE MONTH FOR INTERNERDS

The internet link for this month is:-

[Http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/kim-jong-warns-rockets-ready-settle-accounts-u-s-article-1.1302332](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/kim-jong-warns-rockets-ready-settle-accounts-u-s-article-1.1302332)

This is an article about the recent threats by North Korea's leader reminding us that he is still at war with the U.S. and South Korea. Most Americans may not realize that this is nothing new. The Korean War ended with an armistice (cease fire) but neither side formerly surrendered, and no one expects that to change now. The recent threats are a concern because North Korea may now have long range missile capability and even the possibility of putting WMD heads on the missiles. However this news comes at a time when the U.S. wants to limit military engagements due to demands to reduce the national debt. China may not be as willing to support North Korea as it had in the past. North Korea is probably bluffing in order to get more aid and recognition from the U.S. Even so; if these threats are to be taken seriously there is a need to develop anti-missile defenses and perhaps bomb shelters as Israel has done. Japan, which has been anti-war and has spent little on its own military, while depending on the U.S., is now for the first time since WW2 preparing a larger military budget to show that it can defend itself against China and North Korea.

There is also a YouTube video about Kim Jong Un being a ham. I dunno if it is based on reality or a joke. I have no idea if he is a ham or even if there are any Ham DXers in North Korea, so I won't post a link to the video which shows him with a group of uniformed North Korean military men inspecting what might be a ham station. It would be nice if Ham Radio could open up more friendly relations with N. Korea like "Ping Pong Diplomacy" once did with China, but I guess it cannot occur unless the beloved leader builds or buys some ham radio equipment. Since there are probably no wealthy Capitalists in N. Korea, odds are that the citizenry have not been able to get beyond the crystal set phase.

PUZZLE

This month I will again ask a question from the Amateur Extra Class Exam:-

FCC licensed amateur stations may use spread spectrum (SS) emissions to communicate under which of the following conditions?

- A. When the other station is in an area regulated by the FCC
- B. When the other station is in a country permitting SS communications.
- C. When the transmission is not used to obscure the meaning of any communication
- D. All of these choices are correct

Last month asked the following question from the Amateur Extra Class Exam.

What is the effective radiated power of a repeater station, with 200 watts transmitter power output, 4-dB feed line loss, 3.2-dB duplexer loss, 0.8-dB circulator loss and 10-dB antenna gain?

- A. 317 watts
- B. 2000 watts
- C. 126 watts
- D. 300 watts

The correct answer is A

GARC 2013 Officers

President: Ed Gellender, WB2EAV M/S:X08-14 516-575-0013 edward.gellender@ngc.com
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Secretary: Karen Cafalo, W2ABK 631-754-0974

Treasurer: Ed Gellender, WB2EAV (see above)

WA2LQO Trustee: Ray Schubnel, W2DKM Retiree

2 Yr. Board Member: Jack Cottrell, WA2PYK Retiree 516-249-0979

1 Yr. Board Member: Dave Ledo, AB2EF

1 Yr. Board Member: Jack Hayne, WB2BED

1 Yr. Board Member: George Sullivan, WB2IKT

Newsletter

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GARC Webmaster

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GARC VE Exams

We normally proctor exams for all classes of ham licenses on the second Tuesday of each month, starting at 5:30 PM. The exams are given at Briarcliffe College, 1055 Stewart Avenue, Bethpage, NY in room: Long Beach #5. Ham Exams are: Element 2 – Technician, Element 3 - General, Element 4 – Amateur Extra Class. All applicants must pre-register by contacting Ed Gellender WB2EAV. Time and location of exams are subject to change. If there are no applicants VE sessions will be canceled. The fee for 2013 is \$14 for all exams taken at one sitting. New first time applicants should be aware that their Social Security Number will be required on the application form unless they register with the FCC for an FRN. Applicants for an upgrade should bring their present license and a photocopy of it. All applicants should bring picture ID such as a driver's license. Study material may be bought from the ARRL-VEC or W5YI-VEC <http://www.arrl.org> or <http://www.w5yi.org> All VECs use the same Q & A pools.

Editorial

My health problems continue, and I guess that is to be expected, since I will be 80 years old in July 2013. I have problems with my eyes, ears, legs, and everywhere in between. This newsletter remains the only activity that I promise to continue, because I am scheduled for too many medical appointments and I avoid driving anywhere when it can be avoided. On the positive side I am suffering less pain than I had last year and there is some possibility that I will again be able to be a more active member of future Grumman ARC functions.

--w2ilp--

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CANCEL(L)ED?

Some interesting trivia is that the spell checker accepts either one “L” or two to spell “canceled” or “cancelled.” I have not come across any other words that have two different acceptable American spellings. Perhaps cancelled is the British way and canceled is the American way, just like Americans take the “u” out of the British word “colour” to make it “color” here in the U.S. Now, we may be able to easily cancel one “l” out of cancelled, but I don’t think canceling the national debt would be so easy. The truth is that I haven’t anything to write here this month...but I didn’t want to cancel page 6 entirely.

On the GARC website you can find links to the other Long Island clubs if you want to find out what ham radio activities are happening locally. For example Marconi Day is coming up again and you can get complete details from the Radio Central Club. L no... It won’t get canceled.

--w2ilp--